

MEMBERS, OCONEE COUNTY COUNCIL

Mr. Steven R. Moore, District I Mr. Thomas S. Crumpton, Jr., District II
Rev. William S. "Bill" Rinehart, District III Mr. Marion E. Lyles, District IV
Mr. H. Frank Ables, Jr., District V

MINUTES, OCONEE COUNTY COUNCIL MEETING

The Oconee County Council met Tuesday, April 18, 2006 at 6:00 pm in Council Chambers, 415 South Pine Street, Walhalla, SC with all Council Members present. County Administrator Ron Rabun, Clerk to Council & Mr. Norton, County Attorney were also present.

Press:

Members of the press notified (via mail): Keowee Courier, Westminster News, Daily Journal, Anderson Independent, WGOG Radio, WYFF TV, WLOS TV, WSNW Radio & WIRX Radio.

Members of the press present: Dick Mangrum – WGOG Radio, Dave Williams – Anderson Independent & Brett McLaughlin – Daily Journal.

Other Organizations Notified:

Also notified were the Oconee County Tax Payers Association, Citizens for Recreation Center and the Oconee County Democratic Party.

Call to Order:

Chairman Ables called the meeting to order.

Invocation:

Mr. Rinehart gave the invocation.

Pledge of Allegiance:

Mr. Norton led the pledge of allegiance to the US Flag.

Minutes:

Mr. Lyles made a motion, seconded by Mr. Crumpton, approved 5 – 0 that the minutes of the regular meeting held April 4, 2006 be adopted as printed.

Public Comment Session:

Ms. Susie Cornelius addressed Council regarding the Sewer Agreement extension between Oconee County, Oconee County Sewer Commission & the Municipalities of Seneca, Walhalla, Westminster & West Union, the Sewer Agreement between Oconee County, City of Seneca & Duke Power Company and the Intergovernmental Agreement on sewer between Oconee County & City of Seneca. Ms. Cornelius also addressed Council regarding the State EMS Grant-in-Aid in the amount of \$8,080.

Mr. Bill Graham addressed Council regarding Ordinance 2006-07, "A ORDINANCE IMPOSING A SIX MONTH MORATORIUM ON THE APPROVAL OF SITE PLANS AND/OR BUILDING PERMITS FOR ANY CONSTRUCTION PROJECT WITHIN ONE THOUSAND (1,000') OF LAKES THAT SUPPLY POTABLE WATER IN OCONEE COUNTY UNLESS SAID PROJECT INCLUDES A TWENTY-FIVE (25') FOOT NATURAL BUFFER AND A SIX MONTH MORATORIUM ON THE APPROVAL OF SITE PLANS AND/OR BUILDING PERMITS FOR ANY SUBDIVISION AS DEFINED IN THIS ORDINANCE THAT WILL RESULT IN THE NEED TO UPGRADE A COUNTY ROAD IN ACCORDANCE WITH THIS ORDINANCE".

Mr. Berry Nichols addressed Council regarding Ordinance 2006-10, "LITTER CONTROL ORDINANCE OF OCONEE COUNTY"

Mr. Ben Turetzky showed Council pictures of houses constructed on the lake, some with good protection of the lake waters, some with not good protection of the lake waters and urged adoption of Ordinance 2006-07 on third and final reading.

Mr. Bill Jones addressed Council urging the adoption of Ordinance 2006-07 on third and final reading.

Ms. Linda Lovely addressed Council expressing concerns regarding the misinformation with respect to proposed Ordinance 2006-07 and also applauded Council for their concerns and effort to protect the citizens of Oconee County.

Sewer Agreements:

Mr. Moore made a motion, seconded by Mr. Rinehart, approved 5 – 0 that the attached Sewer Agreement Extension between Oconee County, Oconee County Sewer Commission & the Municipalities of Seneca, Walhalla, Westminster & West Union be adopted.

Sewer Agreements Continued:

Mr. Lyles made a motion, seconded by Mr. Crumpton, approved 4 – 1 (Mr. Moore voting against) that the attached Sewer Agreement between Oconee County, City of Seneca & Duke Power Company be adopted.

Mr. Crumpton made a motion, seconded by Mr. Lyles, approved 4 – 1 (Mr. Moore voting against) that the attached Intergovernmental Agreement on Sewer between Oconee County & City of Seneca be adopted.

Public Hearing RE: Ordinance 2006-07 “AN ORDINANCE IMPOSING A SIX MONTH MORATORIUM ON THE APPROVAL OF SITE PLANS AND/OR BUILDING PERMITS FOR ANY CONSTRUCTION PROJECT WITHIN ONE THOUSAND (1,000’) OF LAKES THAT SUPPLY POTABLE WATER IN OCONEE COUNTY UNLESS SAID PROJECT INCLUDES A TWENTY-FIVE (25’) FOOT NATURAL BUFFER AND A SIX MONTH MORATORIUM ON THE APPROVAL OF SITE PLANS AND/OR BUILDING PERMITS FOR ANY SUBDIVISION AS DEFINED IN THIS ORDINANCE THAT WILL RESULT IN THE NEED TO UPGRADE A COUNTY ROAD IN ACCORDANCE WITH THIS ORDINANCE”:

Mr. Tom Markovich urged Council to postpone the vote on Ordinance 2006-07.

Mr. Wally Fayssoux, Attorney for Marick Home Builders informed Council that his clients are willing to repair the roadway, train the fire departments of any additional training that might be necessary as well as contribute toward the equipment, pay for six miles of sewer. Mr. Fayssoux also urged citizens to take the time to look at the plans for the Monte Lago and further, he informed Council that it is an environmentally sound project with plans to filter storm water. Mr. Fayssoux further urged Council to use caution and wisdom when making their decision regarding the adoption of Ordinance 2006-07.

Mr. Fayssoux also stated that if adopted, this ordinance would divest his clients of their rights regarding the use of the property and a law suit would be filed.

Ms. Linda Lovely stated the plans for Monte Lago had not been available for their review, there would be a reduction in property taxes as the construction of such a complex would devalue their properties and she further stated Oconee County should not for sale at any price.

Mr. Ben Turetzky stated it was time for a vote on the proposed ordinance.

Public Hearing Continued:

Ms. Jo Ann Boyer expressed concerns regarding the width of Luther Land Road.

Mr. John Adams informed Council the definition of an apartment complex was generally five or more units instead of the two units in the definition of apartment complex in Ordinance 2006-07.

Mr. Dale Graham, President of the Home Builders Association informed Council that there were 2083 jobs in Oconee County due to home building with total yearly earnings of \$134,000,000. There were 856 homes built last year in Oconee County increasing the tax base by \$194,000,000. He encouraged Council to take an additional two weeks to study Ordinance 2006-07.

Mr. B. J. Littleton stated the County had already been sold and let the high rise complex be built.

Third & final reading of Ordinance 2006-07 was postponed until the first meeting in May and it was referred back to the Planning Commission for identification and size of the lakes and identification of the buffer.

Ordinance 2006-01:

Mr. Moore made a motion, seconded by Mr. Crumpton, approved 5 – 0 that Ordinance 2006-01, “AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE COUNTY TAX COMMITTEE WHICH IS COMPOSED OF THE COUNTY AUDITOR, TREASURER, AND ASSESSOR TO REVIEW AND TAKE APPROPRIATE ACTION ON AGRICULTURAL AND RESIDENTIAL 4% APPLICATIONS FILED AFTER THE STATUTORY DEADLINE” be adopted on third and final reading.

Ordinance 2006-09:

Mr. Lyles made a motion, seconded by Mr. Rinehart, approved 5 – 0 that Ordinance 2006-09, “AN ORDINANCE REGULATING FALSE FIRE ALARMS TO WHICH OCONEE COUNTY RURAL FIRE DEPARTMENTS RESPOND” be adopted on second reading.

Ordinance 2006-10:

Mr. Rinehart made a motion, seconded by Mr. Crumpton, approved 5 – 0 that Ordinance 2006-10, “LITTER CONTROL ORDINANCE OF OCONEE COUNTY” be adopted on second reading.

Ordinance 2006-11:

Mr. Rinehart made a motion, seconded by Mr. Lyles, approved 5 – 0 that Ordinance 2006-11, “AN ORDINANCE REGULATING THE USE OF COUNTY ROADS” be adopted on second reading.

Emergency Management Grant:

Mr. Rinehart made a motion, seconded by Mr. Lyles, approved 5 – 0 that the motion, of March 21, 2006 to approve two local grant matches of \$10,000 to the Dive Team and \$3,250 to Oakway Rescue Squad be rescinded and a local grant match of \$17,080 for the Dive Team grant application be included in the 2006-07 fiscal year budget.

EMS Grant:

Mr. Moore made a motion, seconded by Mr. Crumpton, approved 5 – 0 that that attached State EMS grant-in-aid funds in the amount of \$8,080 for Oconee Memorial Hospital be submitted with the hospital paying the matching \$500.

Delinquent Tax:

Mr. Ables made a motion, seconded by Mr. Rinehart, approved 4 – 1 (Mr. Moore voting against) that the bid for title searches for delinquent property sales be awarded to Anna Prater at a cost of \$93,000. This was the recommendation of the staff due to this firm’s experience working in Oconee County.

ATAX Grant:

Mr. Crumpton made a motion, seconded by Mr. Moore, approved 5 – 0 that an ATAX Grant in the amount of \$9,898 to the Walhalla Merchants Association for hosting and promotion of the Oconee Cultural Festival be adopted.

Parks, Recreation & Tourism:

Mr. Lyles made a motion, seconded by Mr. Rinehart, approved 5 – 0 that the bid for playground equipment for the County Parks be awarded to Playground Safety Services, Inc. who was low bid at \$77,768. (See attached bid sheet)

Employee Health Benefit Plan:

Mr. Ables made a motion, seconded by Mr. Lyles, approved 5 – 0 that the County Administrator be authorized to renew the Oconee County Health Benefits Plan from May 1, 2006 – April 30, 2007 with Benefit Administrators, Inc. alternate #3 at an approximate cost of \$4,218,105.75. This is a savings of \$377,026 over last year and the premiums for the employees will remain the same. Employees will have a \$25.00 co-pay per office visit and \$8.00 co-pay for generic drugs.

(Mr. Rinehart had to leave at this time)

Rural Fire (Contingency):

Mr. Crumpton made a motion, seconded by Mr. Lyles, approved 4 – 0 that \$25,000 be taken from contingency for Rural Fire vehicle maintenance for the remainder of this fiscal year.

Ordinance 2003-12:

Mr. Moore requested that amendments as asked for by the Keowee Key Fire Commission regarding the election of the commissioners, the filling of vacancies and their reporting responsibilities as delineated in the attached letter be ready for consideration at the next Council Meeting.

Road & Transportation:

Mr. Moore stated he would like to schedule a Road & Transportation Committee meeting in the near future for the purpose of reviewing the tar and gravel proposal and an update on the paving schedule.

Law Enforcement, Public Safety, Health & Welfare:

Mr. Crumpton, Chair, Law Enforcement, Public Safety, Health & Welfare Committee informed Council that if there were any changes made to the Rural Fire Ordinance the Rural Fire Commission would like to have input on the changes.

County Administrator Report:

Mr. Rabun informed Council WYFF would be at the School District Office Wednesday, April 19, 2006 at 9:00 am for the purpose of discussing local issues and there would be a FOLKS Seminar April 20, 2006 at 6:30 pm. Mr. Rabun also informed Council he hoped to have the proposed 2006-07 budget to them by April 25, 2006.

Proposed Budget Workshops:

Mr. Moore, Vice Chair, Budget, Finance & Procurement Committee, presented the attached proposed budget schedule to Council. The May 2nd meeting was changed to May 1st as that will be the only meeting Mr. Rinehart can attend due to surgery.

The May 2nd Council Meeting was also changed to May 1st.

Adjourn:

Adjourn: 8:15 pm.

Respectfully Submitted:

Opal O. Green,
Clerk to Council